

What is claimed is:

1. A balloon catheter, comprising:

an elongate catheter shaft having a distal end, an inflation lumen defined therein,  
and a guidewire lumen defined therein;

a balloon coupled to the shaft and disposed adjacent the distal end of the shaft;

a traction member having a first end and a body portion, the first end being  
coupled to the balloon catheter proximate the distal end of the shaft and the body portion  
extending proximally over at least a portion of the balloon; and

one or more gripping surfaces defined in the body portion.

2. The balloon catheter of claim 1, wherein the one or more gripping surfaces  
are defined by one or more bumps disposed on the body portion.

3. The balloon catheter of claim 1, wherein the one or more gripping surfaces  
are defined by a helical region within the body portion.

4. The balloon catheter of claim 1, wherein the one or more gripping surfaces  
are defined by a ridge along the body portion.

5. The balloon catheter of claim 1, wherein the one or more gripping surfaces  
are defined by one or more saw-tooth projections along the body portion.

6. The balloon catheter of claim 1, wherein the one or more gripping surfaces are defined by one or more spikes along the body portion.

7. The balloon catheter of claim 1, wherein the one or more gripping surfaces are defined by an undulation along the body portion.

8. The balloon catheter of claim 1, wherein the traction member includes a second end coupled to the balloon catheter at a position proximate the proximal end of the balloon.

9. The balloon catheter of claim 1, wherein a portion of the guidewire lumen is arranged coaxially with the balloon.

10. The balloon catheter of claim 9, further comprising a guidewire disposed in the guidewire lumen and extending distally out of a distal end of the guidewire lumen.

11. The balloon catheter of claim 1, wherein the first end of the traction member is coupled to the shaft.

12. The balloon catheter of claim 1, wherein the first end of the traction member is coupled to the balloon.

13. A balloon catheter, comprising:

an elongate catheter shaft having a distal end, an inflation lumen defined therein and a guidewire lumen defined therein;

a balloon coupled to the shaft and disposed adjacent the distal end of the shaft, the balloon being substantially coaxially arranged with at least a region of the guidewire lumen; and

a traction member having a distal end coupled to the balloon catheter at a position proximate the distal end of the shaft and extending in the proximal direction, the traction member being configured to provide traction between the balloon and a target site.

14. The balloon catheter of claim 13, wherein the traction member includes a gripping region defined along at least a portion thereof.

15. The balloon catheter of claim 13, wherein the gripping region is defined by one or more bumps disposed on the traction member.

16. The balloon catheter of claim 13, wherein the gripping region is defined by a helical region of the traction member.

17. The balloon catheter of claim 13, wherein the gripping region is defined by a ridge along the traction member.

18. The balloon catheter of claim 13, wherein the gripping region is defined by one or more saw-tooth projections along the traction member.

19. The balloon catheter of claim 13, wherein the gripping region is defined by one or more spikes coupled to the traction member.

20. The balloon catheter of claim 13, wherein the gripping region is defined by an undulation along the traction member.

21. The balloon catheter of claim 13, wherein the traction member includes a proximal end coupled to the shaft.

22. The balloon catheter of claim 13, wherein a proximal end of the traction member is disposed adjacent a proximal waist of the balloon.

23. The balloon catheter of claim 13, wherein a proximal end of the traction member is disposed adjacent a midpoint of the balloon.

24. The balloon catheter of claim 13, wherein a proximal end of the traction member is disposed adjacent a distal waist of the balloon.

25. A medical device, comprising:  
a catheter shaft having a guidewire lumen defined therein;  
a balloon coupled to the shaft, the balloon being substantially coaxially arranged with respect to at least a region of the guidewire lumen; and

a traction member having a distal end coupled to the balloon catheter at a position proximate distal end of the shaft and extending in the proximal direction and along the balloon.

26. The medical device of claim 25, wherein the traction member includes one or more gripping surfaces defined along at least a portion thereof.

27. The medical device of claim 25, wherein the traction member includes a gripping region defined along at least a portion thereof.

28. The medical device of claim 25, wherein the traction member includes a proximal end coupled to the shaft.

29. The medical device of claim 25, wherein the traction member include a proximal end that is not attached to the shaft and is disposed adjacent the balloon.

30. The medical device of claim 29, wherein the proximal end of the traction member is disposed adjacent a proximal waist of the balloon.

31. The medical device of claim 29, wherein the proximal end of the traction member is disposed adjacent a midpoint of the balloon.

32. The medical device of claim 29, wherein the proximal end of the traction member is disposed adjacent a distal waist of the balloon.

33. A balloon catheter for expanding an intravascular lesion, comprising:  
an elongate catheter shaft having a distal end, an inflation lumen defined therein, and a guidewire lumen defined therein;  
a balloon coupled to the shaft and disposed adjacent the distal end of the shaft;  
and  
means for increasing the traction between the balloon and the intravascular lesion.

34. A balloon catheter for expanding an intravascular lesion, comprising:  
an elongate catheter shaft having a distal end and a guidewire lumen defined therein;  
a balloon coupled to the shaft and disposed adjacent the distal end of the shaft, the balloon being substantially coaxially arranged with at least a region of the guidewire lumen; and  
means for increasing the traction between the balloon and the intravascular lesion.

35. A method for treating an intravascular lesion, comprising the steps of:  
providing a balloon catheter, the balloon catheter including a catheter shaft having a guidewire lumen defined therein, a balloon coupled to the shaft substantially coaxially arranged with respect to at least a region of the guidewire lumen, and a traction member

having a distal end coupled to the shaft at a position distal of the balloon and extending in the proximal direction and along the balloon;

advancing the balloon catheter through a blood vessel to a position adjacent a target site; and

inflating the balloon, whereby the traction member is disposed between the balloon and the target site and improves the traction between the balloon and the target site.